

quiet rebellion

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Summary:

Eddie can taste his cinnamon lipbalm and the menthol on his breath and the heartache in his pulse.

— a glance into the lives of richie and eddie

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Author's Note:

it 2017 has brought back Feelings and Emotions that
i project onto my favourite characters

let these boys be happy they deserve it

late november 1993—derry, maine

He places the cigarette between his glossed lips delicately, inhaling slowly. The taste of menthol is rich on his tongue, cool when he exhales—minty and refreshing, almost. Today's choice of cancer sticks are minty menthol Marlboros. He adjusts his glasses, thick and large, the plastic, scratched frames balancing on the bridge of his freckled nose.

There's a smudge of cinnamon-scented lipbalm around the filter. It reminds him of a fiery redhead.

Plumes of smoke curl around him, attaching itself to his hair, clothes, skin. The air around him is chilly; it's a late winter morning, barely nine o'clock. The sky is still dim above Derry, streetlights only just starting to turn off. Morning commuters' cars are driving by, uncaring about the teen sitting on the curb outside an empty house, about his ruffled appearance and his smoking. His pack of Marlboros sit on the sidewalk next to him, a metallic zippo light on top of it.

His knees are bent, dark jeans ripped—not purposefully—at the knees, a pair of scuffed, white Chucks on his feet, planted firmly on the road. He's swathed in a charcoal hoody, only just able to fit him; it doesn't belong to him. His dark hair, practically ebony, short and curly and messily cut, is caressed slightly by the faint breeze—it takes his smoke away from him in an invisible, vicelike grip.

It's not until the cars slow until none more drive past that he sighs, sitting back on his hands, his third Marlboro between his teeth. He

stretches his long, skinny legs out, rocking his feet from side to side idly, unable to sit still. He lifts a hand to remove his cigarette from his mouth, exhaling upwards. Sitting back up, he leans his forearms on his knees. His watch is blinking almost ten when quiet footsteps walk up behind him, from his right. Someone sits beside him, careful and deliberate in their actions.

They breathe out slowly and tiredly, the voice a little disappointed and raspy. Richie knows exactly who it is. Who *he* is.

"Thought you'd be here," he says quietly. The voice is gentle and calm.

"Really?" Richie replies, voice cool and lilting, unamused. It's almost sarcastic but there isn't enough heart in it. It's an unprecedented contrast to his usual tenor.

Eddie clicks his tongue. "You've been moping around all week. I'm not surprised you didn't bother coming in today," he counters evenly. *Oh yeah. It was Thursday; he was supposed to go to school today. Sometimes he just forgets.* Waking to your parents screaming and slamming doors before leaving for work was a jarring experience. He was used to it.

"Well, you're not wrong about that," Richie says, frowning before his brow smooths out again. "You skipped to come find me?" he then asks, both unsurprised and surprised. He makes a point of exhaling away from the shorter sat beside him. Eddie scoffs.

"You normally tell us when you're playing hooky. You usually tell me, at least," Eddie says and he sounds a little hurt. Richie winces inwardly. "You worried me."

"Sorry," Richie rasps, guilty. He hates it when he makes Eds worry about him. Richie doesn't *really* deserve it—being worried about, that is.

"What happened, Rich?" Eddie asks simply, voice quiet. The road in front of them is empty. Richie doesn't answer. "School?" he continues, Richie shakes his head minutely, still not turning to look at Eddie. If he does, he doesn't think he'll be able to ever look away again.

"Parents?" Eddie guesses.

At Richie's cringe, Eddie knows he's hit the nail on the head. *Not again.*

"I don't want to talk about it, Eds," Richie mutters, stubbing out his finished cigarette out on the curb. There's was a point in time when Eddie decided that he no longer minded the fond nicknames Richie assigned him.

There's a long moment where neither of them speak. Richie's fingers twitch for a fourth cigarette. To do that, he has to turn and look at Eddie, which he can't bring himself to do. "Rich?" a pause. "Will you look at me?" Eds' voice is unfairly soft, like he's worried Richie's fragile or something.

Richie forces himself to turn, to look at Eddie sitting next to him. His chocolatey hair is just as neat and kept as usual, the newly curly—with its new length—coffee strands framing his face, eyebrows slanted in concern. His school bag is still on his back. Eds' wearing a stripy tee, navy blue jeans and a red jacket. His black Vans are spotless. He has an identical watch to Richie—except the strap is silver rather than black, new and void of alarms.

Eddie's eyes, hazel and full of warmth, watch him evenly. They meet Richie's own deep umber, blank and sad. Richie can't help the fluttering in his chest that comes with looking at his Eds.

This is why he didn't want to do it—look at Eddie and get lost in the pits of earth he calls eyes. Get lost far down enough in them and he'd end up at Eds' glowing, burning core.

Eddie gives Richie a sad little smile. He can smell the menthol on him, crisp and heavy, but familiar and almost comforting.

"Come on," Eddie starts, carefully standing. Richie's eyes follow him.

Eddie holds a hand out for him to take.

Richie's skinny hand grasps his.

It's warm—

Eddie pulls him up and he tucks his pack and lighter into the pocket at the front of the hoody. Now that he isn't hunched over, Eddie recognises his attire.

"Are you wearing my hoody?" he asks, bemused and exasperated. Richie looks a little sheepish.

"I borrowed it the last time I slept over your house," he admits quietly, a small smile growing on his pale face. "It barely fits me; you're so tiny." His sad mocha eyes start to brighten. Eddie smirks at him.

The your-mother jokes have started to dwindle as Richie's affections bleed onto Eddie, mentally forbidding himself from bringing up Eds' asshole of a mother to the shorter. Also, the *'sleep over'* was more *'Richie climbing through Eddie's window, holding back tears because his parents were going at it again'*. They don't mention it.

Chuckling calmly, Eddie reaches out to take Richie's cold hand, linking their fingers. Richie smiles down at their joined hands. Eddie steps a little closer, nose to nose with him. He leans in to kiss Richie softly, languidly. Eddie can taste his cinnamon lipbalm and the menthol on his breath and the heartache in his pulse. Richie relishes in the flavour of cherry from Eddie's own lipbalm. When they part, Eds smiles fondly at him.

They start to walk, away from the house they were stood in front of, away from the direction Eddie had came. Walking away from his house feels like a relieved goodbye—Eds' lithe footsteps matching his own, the house getting smaller and smaller as they wander further from it.

Richie, although hesitantly, lets himself smile. Eddie grins right back.

Author's Note:

hope you enjoyed! please comment if you want more
and i will be happy to oblige!

xx

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